

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 076313

O 311702 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1945

INFO ADDIS ABABA NIACT IMMEDIATE 093

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SANAA 517

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: YE, YS, SA, PFOR, MCAP, MOPS

SUBJECT: YARG REQUEST FOR URGENT MILLITARY ASSISTANCE

ADDIS ABABA PASS AMBASSADOR CRAWFORD

REF: SANAA 510; STATE 59826

SUMMARY. COL. IRYANI GAVE US DETAILED BRIEFING AFTERNOON MARCH 31. FROM SOURCE IN OPERATIONS CENTER PDRY, YARG HAS LEARNED OF PLANS TO SEIZE BAB AL- MANDEB WITH PUTATIVE DATE OF APRIL 10. POSSIBLE SECOND STAGE WOULD INVOLVE ADVANCE ON TAIZ. YARG FORCES OUTNUMBERED AND OUT-GUNNED. INFORMATION CONVEYED TO SAG THROUGH ITS MILATT HERE TWO DAYS AGO. IN ADDITION ORDER BATTLE INFO ON PDRY DEVELOPED JOINTLY WITH SAG, IRYANI CLAIMS TO HAVE CONFIRMED EYEWITNESS SIGHTING OF TWENTY

THREE MIG-21'S AT ADEN. IRYANI ALSO MENTIONED OBSERVED SOVIET BUILD-UP ON PERIM AND BELIEVES PURPOSE OF EXPECTED ATTACK IS TO ESTABLISH "CORDON SANITAIRE" AROUND PERIM. IRYANI GAVE ME TRIMMED LIST OF ARMS URGENTLY NEEDED. ACTION REQUESTED: RECOMMEND CONSULTATIONS WITH SAG AND HMG. ALSO REQUEST INPIC COVERAGE OF AREA.

1. CIC, COL MUHAMMAD IRYANI RECEIVED BUCK AND MYSELF 5:00 P. M. MARCH

31. AS PROMISED BY PRIMIN, IRYANI GAVE US DETAILED BRIEFING ON MILITARY

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SITUATION ALONG BORDER AND REASONS YARG EXPECTING ATTACK. SOURCE FOR INFORMATION ON ATTACK, ACCORDING TO IRYANI, IS AGENT WITHIN OPERATIONS ROOM OF PDRY ARMY WHO HAS SEEN DOCUMENTS ORIGINATING

FROM CHIEF OF OPERATIONS. IRYANI HIMSELF HAS JUST RETURNED FROM MID-WEEK INSPECTION TOUR OF AREA OF EXPECTED ATTACK, BAB AL- MANDEB.

2. DETAILS OF PDRY PLAN, AS GLEANED BY YAR IS AS FOLLOWS. FOCAL POINT IS FINGER OF YAR LAND EXTENDING SOUTH FROM COASTAL VILLAGE OF DUBAB (UTM GRID ZONE 38 P 327 E 1432 N). YEMENIS EXPECT THREE PRONGED ATTACK. PDRY FORCE STATIONED ON PERIM (ONE INFANTRY BATTALION, ONE ROCKET BATTALION,

ONE TANK BATTALION PLUS AMPHIBIOUS PERSONNEL CARRIERS) IS TO MAKE AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT ON DUBAB. LARGER FORCE AT BIR SAQAYA TO EAST (ONE BRIGADE OF THREE INFANTRY BATTALIONS I. E. 1500 MEN, ONE ROCKET BATTALION

AND ONE TANK BATTALION) WILL ATTACK SINGLE 500 MAN YARG BATTALION AT SHAYKH SA' ID (HALF OF YARG FORCES IN AREA). UNSPECIFIED FORCE IN WADI MA' MAR (363 E 1443 N) WILL DRIVE WEST TO SEIZE JABAL DUBAB AND CUT OFF YARG RETREAT ROUTE. PUTATIVE DATE FOR LAUNCHING OF ATTACK APRIL 10 ACCORDING TO SOURCE. PDRY FORCES IN MANDEB AREA WERE BEING HEAVILY REINFORCED DURING CIC IRYANI VISIT THERE. ESTIMATED 85 MILITARY VEHICLES ARRIVED IN BIR SUQAYA IN ONE NIGHT AND DAILY FLIGHTS INTO PERIM AVERAGED SIX ANTONOV TRANSPORTS AND THREE LARGE HELICOPTERS. MOST CIVILIANS HAVE BEEN EXPELLED FROM PERIM AND BIR SUQAYA AREAS. IRYANI CLAIMS RUSSIANS ON PERIM INCLUDE RUSSIAN EXPERTS, SIGHTED RECENTLY BY YEMENI FISHERMEN, AND NAVAL ELEMENTS.

4. FROM SAME SOURCES, IRYANI REVEALED YARG HAS LEARNED OF SECOND STAGE

OF ATTACK TO BE CARRIED OUT IF FIRST STAGE DETAILED ABOVE SUCCEEDS. UNITS TAKING DUBAB AREA WOULD MOVE NORTH TOWARDS MOCHA- TAIZ ROAD. TWENTY- SECOND BRIGADE AT KIRSH WOULD MOVE ON ROAD THROUGH RAHIDA TO- WARDS TAIZ, WHILE THIRTIETH BRIGADE OPPOSITE MAWIYA WOULD MOVE WEST TOWARDS TAIZ AIRPORT AT JANAD. (IRYANI REPORTED ROCKET ATTACK ACROSS BORDER ON

HASHA' NE OF MAWIYA MARCH 30.)

5. IRYANI ALSO GAVE US LIST OF ARRIVALS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN ADEN
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DURING LAST FIVE MONTHS AS FOLLOWS (LIST DEVELOPED IN
COOPERATION WITH SAG): 20 MIG-17' S;
18 IL-28' S; 9 TROOP- CARRYING HELICOPTERS (TOTAL INVENTORY NOW 15);
120 ROCKET LAUNCHERS (GROUND- TO- AIR AND GROUND- TO- GROUND); 120
COASTAL

ARTILLERY PIECES (SIC); 90 SOVIET HALF- TRACKS (SIC); 25 T-54 TANKS;
200 SIX- BARRELED AA PIECES (ARRIVED FEB 25); 85 APC' S FROM EAST GER-
MANY;
AND 135 AMPHIBIOUS PERSONNEL CARRIERS CAPABLE OF CARRYING 14
TROOPS
EACH.

IN ADDITION, ALTHOUGH NOT CONFIRMED INDEPENDENTLY BY SAUDIS, YARG
CLAIMS EYE- WITNESS SIGHTING OF 12 MIG-21' S WHICH ARRIVED TWO MONTHS
AGO AND ADDITIONAL 11 TWO WEEKS AGO. ALSO CLAIMS ARRIVAL
ADDITIONAL 60 T-54 TANKS.

6. AGAINST THIS YARG IN DUBAB- MANDEB AREA HAS
ONE BRIGADE (TWO BATTALIONS)
OF INFANTRY, ONE BATTALION OF ARTILLERY AND A FEW TANKS. TROOPS
DEMORALIZED BECAUSE MOST OF WEAPONS INOPERABLE. YARG ATTEMPTING
TO MOVE

ADDITIONAL ARMY AND TRIBAL UNITS SOUTH, BUT HAMPERED BY LACK OF
TRANSPORT AND WEAPONS.

7. I ASKED IRYANI WHAT YARG SPECIFICALLY NEEDED IN THIS APPARENT
EMERGENCY. HE RESPONDED BY SHOWING US LARGE LIST PRESENTED
DURING SAUDI- YEMENI RIYADH TALKS. I COMMENTED THAT THESE OVERALL
NEEDS; WHAT WERE CRITICAL ITEMS NEEDED NOW.
IRYANI LISTED FOLLOWING ITEMS;
ONE OR TWO BATTALIONS OF 106 MM RECOILLESS RIFLES, JEEP- MOUNTED
(18 PER BATTALION), 300 TRUCKS, 500 HEAVY MACHINE GUNS FOR GROUND
AND AIR- DEFENSE, 6 HELICOPTERS, AND WATER TRUCKS TO SUPPLY
WATERLESS
SHAIKH SA' ID. IRYANI RESPONDED TO MY QUESTION THAT HE HAD CONVEYED
INFORMATION ON ATTACK TO SAUDI MILATT TWO DAYS AGO, BUT I DO
NOT BELIEVE HE GAVE HIM BOILED- DOWN LIST.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 076348

O 311702 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1946

INFO ADDIS ABABA NIACT IMMEDIATE 094

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

8. I ASKED IRYANI IF YARG DID NOT PLAN TO CONTACT OTHER ARAB GOVTS TO INFORM THEM OF EXPECTED ATTACK TO TRY TO PUT PRESSURE ON PDRY TO CALL OFF PLANS. IRYANI SAID IT NOT FINAL, BUT HE EXPECTS YARG WILL SEND DEP CIC COL. IBRAHIM AL- HAMDY AND MINSTATE FOR UNITY HUMRAN TO ARAB CAPITALS ON JUST SUCH A MISSION. I SUGGESTED PERSONALLY THAT IT MIGHT COME TO POINT WHEN YARG FELT IT PRUDENT TO ANNOUNCE PUBLICLY IMPENDING ATTACK.

9. I TOLD IRYANI THAT I KNEW HE AWARE OF GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT USG SHOULD PROCEED INDIRECTLY IN ARMS FIELD. I BELIEVE THEREFORE THAT USG WOULD WANT TO CONSULT URGENTLY WITH SAG TO LEARN ITS VIEWS AND DIS-

CUSS POSSIBLE MEASURE. IRYANI AGREED BUT ASKED THAT OUR RESPONSE BE AS SPEEDY AS POSSIBLE. SPECIFICALLY HE HOPED THAT SAG RESPONSE TO THIS

EMERGENCY WOULD NOT WAIT ON INSPECTION TRIP BY SENIOR SAUDI GENERAL AS NOW SCHEDULED.

10. IRYANI ALSO TOLD ME THAT LETTER FROM PDRY PRES RUBAY' ALI TO YARG PRES. IRYANI, DELIVERED BY EMISSARY THREE DAYS AGO, DEMANDED RETURN OF KAMARAN (ON SAME DAY FORCES ON KAMARAN, PRESUMABLY NUF, DROVE

OFF TWO ELF BOATS ATTEMPTING TO LAND). YARG INFORMATION IS THAT PDRY PLANS TO USE PROPAGANDA SCREEN TO ALLEGED ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF ZUQAR TO SEIZE BOTH YAR TERRITORY AT BAB AL- MANDEB AND NUMBER OF RED SEA ISLANDS.

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11. COMMENT. COL IRYANI' S BRIEFING OBVIOUSLY VERY DETAILED AND ALLEGED

SOURCE LENDS PLAUSIBILITY. BELIEVE WE NEED QUICKLY SOME INDEPENDENT CONFIRMATION AT LEAST OF PDRY FORCE DISPOSITIONS. WOULD HOPE THAT HMG AND SAG MIGHT ADD SOMETHING. ALSO REQUEST INPIC COVERAGE OF AREA FROM BAB AL-

MANDEB TO ADEN. CALL TODAY ON RECENTLY ARRIVED SAUDI CHARGE DREW BLAND,

BUT WILL TRY WITH SAG MILATT (AND UK AMBASSADOR) TOMORROW. NEWTON

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS

*** Current Classification *** SECRET

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SANAA00517
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SANAA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730342/aaaaimjz.tel
Line Count: 250
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <02-Aug-2001 by maustmc, RDFRD>; RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by golinofr>; APPROVED <23-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> srp 980109
Subject: YARG REQUEST FOR URGENT MILLITARY ASSISTANCE
TAGS: MCAP, MOPS, PFOR, SA, YE, YS
To: SECSTATE WASHDC
SS INFO ADDIS ABABA
JIDDA
LONDON
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005